



# How to Prepare a Resume and Cover Letter

Prepared by  
State Personnel Board  
Examination and Selection  
Services Section

## **TRANSFERABLE SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

Evaluating your background to identify those skills and abilities you have acquired is an important part for an exam interview, completing your application and resume. Sometimes we do not recognize that a skill we have acquired in one job or environment can also be relevant to a new job or work environment in which we are interested. The following list is provided as a resource to assist you in identifying skills you have acquired that may be transferable to a different type of position. This information may also help you identify skills or abilities on an application form or resume.

### **A. Planning**

- o Determine, establish objectives
- o Forecast, schedule, program
- o Plan program evaluation and revision
- o Formulate, determine requirements, policies, procedures, budgets

### **B. Organizing**

- o Design organizational structure
- o Assess reorganization proposals

### **C. Training**

- o Explain difficult concepts
- o Teach
- o Use materials and techniques to enhance learning process

### **D. Managing, Administering**

- o Design projects
- o Chair committees, preside over groups
- o Administer, manage human resources
- o Administer projects, programs
- o Direct or conduct public events

## Transferable Skills and Abilities

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### E. Leadership

- o Initiate, formulate objectives
- o Define objectives, select people
- o Develop people (executive, technical, administrative, other)
- o Solve problems, make decisions
- o Motivate, trouble shoot

### F. Time, Energy Management

- o Manage time
- o Prioritized efficiency
- o Work from several agendas at once with ease
- o Schedule, assess and evaluate competing needs
- o Choose courses of action based on priorities

### G. Paperwork and Detail

- o File
- o Write and file reports
- o Use, set up report systems
- o Follow through on details

### H. Analyzing, Synthesizing

- o Evaluate programs, projects
- o Interpret policy
- o Analyze performance specifications
- o Establish standards
- o Revise standards
- o Assess performance
- o Analysis and review
- o See relationships between ideas, things
- o Involvement in sensitive and/or volatile situations

Transferable Skills and Abilities  
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I. Personal traits that may add a unique dimension to any of the above

- o Demonstrate reliability
- o Be perceptive
- o Demonstrate unusual patience and persistence
- o Highly observant
- o Use imagination
- o Courage of convictions
- o Take initiative
- o Enthusiastic
- o Adjusts to changing situations (life and work)
- o Able to work under pressure
- o Open to new experiences and situations

J. In describing your achievements, consider using descriptive words

- o Responsible
- o Played a key role
- o Conceive and manage
- o Develop and implement
- o Establish and implement policies and procedures
- o Plan and direct
- o Program
- o Design, research
- o Developed a systematic program to achieve...
- o Won an award for...
- o Supervised the work of...
- o Administer
- o Act as spokesperson for a group
- o Organize
- o Interpret
- o Create, assess the value of...
- o Formulate policy for...
- o Coordinate
- o Conduct
- o Initiate

## ACTION WORDS . . . . .

The "\*" words are especially good for pointing out accomplishments.

Clerical or Detail Skills	Communica- tion Skills	Creative Skills	Financial Skills	Helping Skills
approved	addressed	acted	administered	assessed
arranged	arbitrated	conceptualized	allocated	assisted
catalogued	arranged	created	analyzed	clarified
classified	authored	customized	appraised	counseled
collected	collaborated	designed	audited	demonstrated
compiled	*convinced	developed	balanced	diagnosed
dispatched	corresponded	directed	budgeted	educated
executed	developed	established	calculated	*expedited
generated	directed	fashioned	computed	facilitated
implemented	drafted	*founded	developed	motivated
inspected	edited	illustrated	forecasted	referred
monitored	enlisted	*initiated	managed	represented
operated	formulated	integrated	marketed	
organized	influenced	*introduced	planned	
prepared	interpreted	*originated	projected	
processed	lectured	performed	researched	
purchased	mediated	planned		
recorded	moderated	*revitalized		
retrieved	negotiated	wrote		
screened	persuaded			
specified	promoted			
systemized	publicized			
tabulated	recruited			
validated	translated			
	wrote			

Management Skills	Research Skills	Teaching Skills	Technical Skills	More Verbs for Accomplishments
administered	clarified	adapted	assembled	
analyzed	collected	advised	built	*achieved
assigned	critiqued	clarified	calculated	*expanded
*attained	diagnosed	communicated	computed	*pioneered
chaired	evaluated	coordinated	designed	*reduced (losses)
consolidated	examined	demystified	devised	*resolved (problems)
contracted	extracted	developed	engineered	*transformed
coordinated	identified	enabled	fabricated	
delegated	inspected	encouraged	maintained	
developed	interpreted	evaluated	operated	
directed	interviewed	explained	*overhauled	
evaluated	investigated	facilitated	programmed	
executed	reviewed	guided	remodeled	
*improved	summarized	informed	repaired	
*increased	systematized	instructed	solved	
organized		persuaded	upgraded	
oversaw		set goals		
planned		stimulated		
prioritized		trained		
produced				
recommended				
reviewed				
scheduled				
*strengthened				
supervised				

## Sample Cover Letter

Date

Name of Employer

Title

Name of Organization

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

State the purpose for writing: the name of the position or field, or the general vocational area about which you are asking. Be specific. Explain your source of information and express knowledge of the organization.

Summarize your qualifications which are of greatest value to the employer. Cite relevant experience. State your interest in that particular organization, location, or type of work. Refer to the application or resume you have enclosed.

Request the next step in the employment process: Ask for an interview. Suggest a date and time at the convenience of the employer. Indicate that you will confirm by telephone. Be specific, and be sure to honor your arrangements.

Sincerely,

(Your signature in black ink)

Your Typed Name (Legal name, no abbreviations)

Address

Phone Number

Enclosure: Resume

# CHRONOLOGICAL

This is the most common and readily acceptable form of presentation. It's what most of us think of when we think of resumes - a chronological listing of job titles and responsibilities. It starts with current or most recent employment, then works backwards to your first job.



Jane Swift, 9 Central Avenue, Quincy, MA 02269. (617) 555-1212

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SUMMARY: Ten years of increasing responsibilities in the employment services industry. Concentration in the high technology markets.

EXPERIENCE: Howard Systems International, Inc. 1985-Present  
Management Consulting Firm  
Personnel Manager

Responsible for recruiting and managing consulting staff of five. Set up office and organized the recruitment, selection and hiring of consultants. Recruited all levels of MIS staff from financial to manufacturing markets.

Additional responsibilities:

- \* coordinated with outside advertising agencies
- \* developed P.R with industry periodicals - placement with over 20 magazines and newsletters
- \* developed effective referral programs - referrals increased 32%

EXPERIENCE: Technical Aid Corporation 1977-1985  
National Consulting Firm. MICRO/TEMPS Division

Division Manager 1983 - 1985  
Area Manager 1980 - 1983  
Branch Manager 1978 - 1980

As Division Manager, opened additional West Coast offices Staffed and trained all offices with appropriate personnel. Created and implemented all divisional operational policies responsible for P & L. Sales increased to \$20 million dollars, from \$0 in 1978.

- \* Achieved and maintained 30% annual growth over 7 year period.
- \* Maintained sales staff turnover at 14%.

As Area Manager opened additional offices, hiring staff, setting up office policies and training sales and recruiting personnel.

Additional responsibilities:

- \* supervised offices in two states
- \* developed business relationships with accounts -- 75% of clients were regular customers.
- \* client base increased 28% per year.
- \* generated over \$200,000 worth of free trade journal publicity.

As Branch Manager, hired to establish the new MICRO/TEMPS operation. Recruited and managed consultants. Hired internal staff. Sold service to clients.

EDUCATION: Boston University  
B.S. Public Relations, 1977

# FUNCTIONAL

This format focuses on the professional skills you have developed over the years, rather than when, where or how you acquired them. It de-emphasizes dates, sometimes to the point of exclusion. The attention is always focused on the skill rather than the context or time of acquisition.

Jane Swift  
9 Central Avenue  
Quincy, MA 02269  
(617) 555-1212

**OBJECTIVE:** A position in Employment Services where my management, sales and recruiting talents can be effectively utilized to improve operations and contribute to company profits.

**SUMMARY:** Over ten years of Human Resources experience. Extensive responsibility for multiple branch offices and an internal staff of 40+ employees and 250 consultants.

**SALES:** Sold high technology consulting services with consistently profitable margins throughout the United States. Grew sales from \$0 to over \$20 million a year.  
  
Created training programs and trained salespeople in six metropolitan markets.

**RECRUITING:** Developed recruiting sourcing methods for multiple branch offices.  
  
Recruited over 25,000 internal and external consultants in the high technology professions.

**MANAGEMENT:** Managed up to 40 people in sales, customer service, recruiting, and administration. Turnover maintained below 14% a "turnover business"

**FINANCIAL:** Prepared quarterly and yearly forecasts. Presented, reviewed and defended these forecasts to the Board of Directors. Responsible for P & L of \$20 million sales operation.

**PRODUCTION:** Responsible for opening multiple offices and accountable for growth and profitability. 100% success and maintained 30% growth over 7 year period in 10 offices.

**WORK EXPERIENCE:**

1985 to Present      HOWARD SYSTEMS INTERNATIONAL, Boston, MA  
National Consulting Firm  
Personnel Manager

1978-1985            TECHNICAL AID CORPORATION, Needham, MA  
National Consulting & Search Firm  
Division Manager

**EDUCATION:** B.S., 1977, Boston University

**REFERENCES:** Available upon request.

# COMBINATION

This format has the flexibility and strength that comes from combining both the chronological and functional formats.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES MANAGEMENT

Jane Swift  
9 Central Avenue  
Quincy, MA 02269  
(617) 555-1212

OBJECTIVE:

## Employment Services Management

- SUMMARY: Ten years of increasing responsibilities in the employment services marketplace. Concentration in the high technology markets.
- SALES: Sold high technology consulting services with consistently profitable margins throughout the United States. Grew sales from \$0 to over \$20 million a year.
- PRODUCTION: Responsible for opening multiple offices and accountable for growth and profitability. 100% success and maintained 30% growth over 7 year period in 10 offices.
- MANAGEMENT: Managed up to 40 people in sales, customer service, recruiting, and administration. Turnover maintained below 14% a "turnover business". Hired Branch Managers, Sales and recruiting Staff throughout United States.
- FINANCIAL: Prepared quarterly and yearly forecasts. Presented, reviewed and defended these forecasts to the Board of Directors. Responsible for P & L of \$20 million sales operation.
- MARKETING: Performed numerous market studies for multiple branch openings. Resolved feasibility of combining two different sales offices. Study resulted in savings of over \$5,000 per month in operating expenses.
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EXPERIENCE:

Howard Systems International, Inc. 1985-Present  
Management Consulting Firm  
Personnel Manager

Responsible for recruiting and managing consulting staff of five. Set up office and organized the recruitment, selection and hiring of consultants. Recruited all levels of MIS staff from financial to manufacturing markets.

Additional responsibilities:

- \* developed P.R with industry periodicals – placement with over 20 magazines and newsletters
- \* developed effective referral programs – referrals increased 320%

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Technical Aid Corporation 1977-1985  
National Consulting Firm. MICRO/TEMPS Division

Division Manager 1983 - 1985  
Area Manager 1980 - 1983  
Branch Manager 1978 - 1980

As Division Manager, opened additional West Coast offices Staffed and trained all offices with appropriate personnel. Created and implemented all divisional operational policies. Responsible for P & L Sales increased to \$20 million dollars, from \$0 in 1978.

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As Area Manager opened additional offices, hiring staff, setting up office policies, training sales and recruiting personnel.

Additional responsibilities:

- \* supervised offices in two states
- \* developed business relationships with accounts – 75% of clients were regular customers.
- \* client base increased 28% per year.
- \* generated over \$200,000 worth of free trade journal publicity.

As Branch Manager, hired to establish the new MICRO/TEMPS operation. Recruited and managed consultants. Hired internal staff. Sold service to clients.

EDUCATION:

B.S., 1977, Boston University

**OBJECTIVES:**

To use my pharmacy, communication, administrative, and organizational skills in a challenging position as a hospital pharmacist.

**EXPERIENCE:**

*Resident Pharmacist. Teaneck Community Hospital. May 1986 - Present*

Pharmacy administration, provision of drug information/poison control center services, clinical services, outpatient pharmacy services, and investigational drug services.

Duties included rotations throughout all areas of a progressive, computerized hospital pharmacy department. Including: Drug Information, Medical Information, Administration, Clinical Pharmacy, Outpatient Pharmacy, and Investigational Drug Services

*Staff Pharmacist, Centralized and Decentralized Services. Mahwah Cottage Hospital. May 1983 - May 1986*

Inpatient unit dose drug distribution and IV admixture services; participation in daily hematology and GI patient rounds; discharge patient counseling. Provision of drug information to hospital staff; participation on aminoglycoside pharmacokinetic monitoring service; training and education of new pharmacists and pharmacy students.

*Pharmacy Extern. Mahwah Cottage Hospital. February 1983 - May 1983*

IV admixture preparation, unit dose drug distribution, maintenance of patient profiles, and quality assurance procedures.

*Pharmacy Extern. Apothecary. Mahwah Cottage Hospital. November 1982 - February 1983*

Participated in patient counseling, patient profile maintenance, extensive extemporaneous compounding service, and inventory control.

**APPOINTMENTS:**

American Hospital Formulary Service Reviewer

**REGISTRATION:**

State of New Jersey

**AFFILIATIONS:**

American Society of Hospital Pharmacists

American Pharmaceutical Association

American Society of Hospital Pharmacists

**EDUCATION:**

Bachelor of Science, Pharmacy, New Jersey Institute of Technology 1983

James Sharpe  
9 Central Avenue  
Kansas City, MO 64108  
(816) 555-1212

**OBJECTIVE:** Seek a responsible position with growth opportunities in the field of Financial Management.

**PROFESSIONAL  
EXPERIENCE:**

May 1985 to Present      FIRST SAVINGS BANK      Kansas City, MO  
Bank Teller  
Duties include computing figures with speed and accuracy, maintaining proper activity in customer accounts, operating computer to retrieve processed data, controlling and supervising large amounts of cash flow, and obtaining accountability of transactions.

January 1984 to May 1985      NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK (internship)      Kansas City, MO  
Assistant to Retirement Accounts Manager  
Duties include recording of contributions to new and existing accounts, assisting customers with information regarding benefits of IRA's and KEOGH's calculating specific year-to-date interest and tax deduction advantages, assisting manager with form procedures to complete transactions.  
  
Special research project as to the feasibility of funding retirement accounts with Zero Coupon Bonds obtained currently by brokers and anticipating the participation of Financial Institutions, specifically banks.

**EDUCATION:** B.B.A., City University College, May 1985. Concentration in Management Techniques, interest in Finance.

**SPECIAL  
ACTIVITIES:** Student Academic Affairs Committee, attention to improving balance within the academic environment at the college.

**REFERENCES:** Furnished upon request.



Jane Swift  
9 Central Avenue  
Bridgeview, IL 60455  
(312) 555-1212

HARDWARE: DEC VAX 11/780, System 10, PDP-11/45, PDP-8, Prime 850, 750, 550; IBM 360

SOFTWARE: VMS (RMS), TOPS-10, TSX-11M, DOS, PRIMOS, Prime Information, TAPR; Knowledge of Datatrieve

LANGUAGES: COBOL, Info/BASIC, MACRO-11, DCL, GEOMAP, RPG, FORTRAN, EasyCoder

EXPERIENCE: BankSafe Software Inc., Chicago, IL.

7/83 - Present Senior Programmer/Analyst - Involved in the design and development of Financial Software targeted for the banking industry. Write applications for: Product creation, fee and index processing. Also involved with tape processing for third-party sources: Credit Agencies; IRS, and Social Security. Language: COBOL Hardware: DEC VAX 11/780.

Illinois Education Assistance Corporation, Chicago, IL.

1982 - 1983 Programmer/Analyst - Participated in the design of reports and statistical analyses and in format conversion of the GSLP (Guaranteed Student Loan Program) System. Responsible for some documentation Language: COBOL Hardware: Prime 750, 550.

CITY OF CHICAGO, MIS DEPARTMENT.

1977 - 1980 Programmer II - Promoted to this position after one year as Programmer I. Project leader for Payroll System. Lead Programmer in planning stages of conversion for all systems from DEC-10 to Univac.

Programmer I - Participated in design and programming for Task Accounting and Reporting applications. Programmed for Computer Assisted Appraisal and Elections application. Wrote user guide for data entry. Language: COBOL Hardware: DEC System 10

EDUCATION: B.S. Computer Engineering, University of Lowell, Lowell, MA.

JAMES SHARPE  
9 CENTRAL AVENUE  
ATLANTA, GA 30305  
(404) 555-1212

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*Employment*

3/84-Present      Occupational Therapy Department  
St Joseph's Hospital, Atlanta, GA  
Staff Occupational Therapist, Registered/Licensed

1/82-3/84      Occupational Therapy Department, Baylor Medical Center, Dallas, TX  
Staff Occupational Therapist

1/79-1/82      Occupational Therapy Department, Kaiser Medical Center, San Francisco,  
CA  
Occupational Therapy Assistant

*Education*

University of Georgia. Graduated 1979  
Degree: Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy  
Cumulative GPA: 3.8      Major GPA: 3.93

*Special Projects:*

Private Practice: Pediatrics. Independent Study: Child Life Program; Play  
Therapy

*Fieldworks:*

Physical Dysfunction. Psycho-Social. Pediatrics

*Affiliations*

American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)  
Georgia Occupational Therapy Association (GOTA)

*Personal*

Excellent health, no physical limitations. Will relocate.

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*Reference List Available Upon Request*

Jane Swift  
9 Central Avenue  
King of Prussia, PA  
(215) 555-1212

*HARDWARE:* IBM 3031, IBM 4341, UNIVAC 1100/60/80, UNIVAC 90/30, Burroughs 3500/4700, NCR Century/Criterion, Honeywell 6000, IBM and IBM Compatible Microcomputers

*O/S:* VM/CMS, OS/MVS, TSO, OS/1100, MCP, GCOS, PC-DOS, MS-DOS, NOVELLE, ALLOY ATNX

*SOFTWARE:* EDITOR-1100, TIP-1100, DPS-1100, DMS-1100, QLP-1100, CTS, DML, DDL, SDDL, SSG, GSA, IRU, ECL, JCL, JES2

*LANGUAGES:* COBOL, BASIC, GW-BASIC, MS-BASIC, R:BASE 5000/SYSTEM V, TAS DBMS, CONDOR II, DBASE III, NEAT/3, ADA

*EDUCATION:* M.S Computer Systems, May 1980 San Jose State, CA

Consulting projects include the following:

Analyzed the requirements of a Professional Property Management firm, to determine the lowest cost multi-user configuration, based upon existing and projected requirements. Developed, acquired and installed all hardware, peripheral equipment and software.

Performed a workflow analysis of the procedures for filling customer orders at a Valve Manufacturer's finished goods warehouse. Upon completion, presented to corporate management a formal report of the workflow and current operating procedures.

Developed an interactive multi-user system for a Structural Steel Fabricating Company, to calculate the weight of finished goods based upon dimensions listed on architectural drawing.

Developed the software modules for an interactive database for a Slate Roofing Company, based upon specifications provided by prime contractor.

For a major bank performed trade-off studies to identify capabilities suitable for replacement with commercially available off-the-shelf products vs. being developed internally. Projected lines of code estimates for modules being rewritten in Ada.

For County Government responsible for the conversion of COBOL applications from a Univac 90/30 to a Univac 1100/60. Developed JCL runstreams for all systems converted.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

# Job Information Worksheet

Position or Job Title:

Company Name:

Specific Duties/Requirements of Position:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Required Education:    HS    BA/BS    MA/MS    Ph.D    Other

Major:

Minor:

Required/Acceptable Experience:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Required Certifications/License/Training:

1.

2.

3.

4.

# Experience Worksheet

Job Title:

Employer:

Dates of Employment:

From:

To:

Duties/Responsibilities:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Achievements:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Skills Learned/Knowledge acquired/Abilities demonstrated:

1.

2.

3.

# Personal Information Worksheet

Name:

Address:

Phone Number(s):

Home:

Work:

Objective:

Formal Education:

	Degree	College/University	Date Awarded
1.			
2.			
3.			

Educational Awards:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Other Education/Training:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Experience Highlights:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Other Activities/Information:

## References

Name:

Address:

Telephone Number(s)

Relationship to You:

What will he/she say about you?

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Name:

Address:

Telephone Number(s)

Relationship to You:

What will he/she say about you?

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Name:

Address:

Telephone Number(s)

Relationship to You:

What will he/she say about you?

## USEFUL TIPS FOR FILLING OUT EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION FORMS

Don't be careless. Do it carefully. Your application is the first impression you make on the employer-- explain the quality of work you do and your ability to think and follow instructions.

Don't resent questions pertaining to your personal affairs. Why? Because the employer wants to know about your background so an evaluation in relation to the job openings may be made.

Don't hedge on questions like education, experience and age. Give exact facts. Put it on the line, be frank and honest if these questions are asked.

Be prepared, have the information you will need at the tip of your fingers.

Have names and addresses of references and former employers with you. Don't ask for the telephone book to look them up.

Carry a pen and use your own pen when filling out the application. Don't ask to borrow one from the employer.

Fill out the blanks quickly and accurately. It speaks well of efficiency.

Be sure to follow all instructions on the application form.

Be neat. No erasures, no perspiration smudges, print unless a writing sample is needed for that job, or unless the application calls for a signature.

Be accurate: read the application through first so you don't answer a question in the wrong place. It helps to write out answers on a separate page first to get the wording just right. Another technique is to secure a duplicate application ahead of time and fill it out to use it as a reference for the final.

Check the spellings of names and places. Have addresses and proper dates available before you go (carry a sheet with all this information with you). Be sure to list any experience including part time and volunteer if applicable to the job.

If a question is not applicable, line it out or leave the space blank if it requires special explanation (use the technique sparingly). If required attach a separate sheet with the explanation.

Application can be made more effective by expanding on duties and responsibilities in past experience and by making every answer as positive as possible.

Gear each application to the individual job (each may have differing emphasis.) Select education and experience which is applicable to the specific job for which you are applying.

On some applications, you may be able to attach a resume, ask if this is ok and if it is, then attach a resume, this can save you time and effort. Be sure to be prepared and have a resume with you to save yourself some time.